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THE ATTITUDE OF EMINENT ENGLISHMEN AND AMERICANS TOWARD *WERTER*

During the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, considerable attention was given to *Werter* by several eminent Englishmen and Americans. One of the first to refer to the book was William Taylor of Norwich. He is said to have been the first Englishman of letters to read Goethe in the original,¹ and he was, before the appearance of Carlyle, the chief expositor of German literature in England.² For several years he was a contributor to the leading magazines, and most of his criticisms were afterward collected and published in his *Historic Survey of German Poetry* (1830). Taylor confessed that he knew very little of Goethe's life; and the character of some of his reviews indicates that his knowledge of the general background of Goethe's writings was limited. He comments thus on *Werter*, after giving a very brief outline of the story: "The beauty and eloquence of the style, the progressive interest, and deep pathos of the story place this novel at the head of all the German romances. It has been translated into English, but not very happily."³ Speaking of *Wilhelm Meister*, he says: "In general, however, this novel is written in a prose far inferior to that of *Werter's Sufferings* in clearness, elegance, picturesque beauty or pathetic stimulation."⁴

While Southey did not make particular comment on Goethe's novel, he was inspired by the book to write the following sonnet:

What though no sculptured monument proclaim
Thy fate—yet, Albert, in my breast I bear
Inshrined the sad remembrance: yet thy name
Will fill my throbbing bosom. When despair,
The child of murdered hope, fed in thy heart,
Loved, honoured friend, I saw thee sink forlorn,

¹ Cf. Robberds, *Memoirs of William Taylor of Norwich*, II, 573.

² Herzfeld, *William Taylor of Norwich. Eine Studie über den Einfluss der neueren deutschen Literatur in England*.

³ *Historic Survey of German Poetry*, III, 242-43.

⁴ *Ibid.*, III, 349.

Pierced to the soul by cold neglect's keen dart,
 And penury's hard ills, and pitying scorn,
 And the dark spectre of departed joy,
 Inhuman memory. Often on thy grave
 Love I the solitary hour to employ
 Thinking on other days; and heave the sigh
 Responsive, when I mark the high grass wave
 Sad sounding as the cold breeze rustles by.¹

In dealing altogether with Albert, this sonnet is distinctly different from all the other English poems that the novel called forth.² It seems probable that the sonnet was written during Southey's career at Westminster School from 1787 to 1792, for in reviewing that period in a letter to his friend Townshend in June, 1816, he says: "I left Westminster in a perilous state—a heart full of Rousseau and *Werter*, and my religious principles shaken by Gibbon."³ His enthusiasm for *Werter* was not long-lived. In a letter of March, 1799, he writes: "Once, indeed, I had a mimosa sensibility, but it has long ago been routed out. Five years ago I counteracted Rousseau by dieting upon Godwin and Epictetus; they did some good, but time has done more. I have a dislike to all strong emotion, and avoid whatever could excite it. A book like *Werter* gives me now unmingled pain. In my own writings, you may observe, I dwell rather upon what affects than what agitates."⁴ In a letter to James White, dated November 11, 1814, he writes: "When I was about eighteen, I made Epictetus literally my manual for some twelve months, and by that wholesome course of stoicism counteracted the mischief which I might else have incurred from a passionate admiration of *Werter* and Rousseau."⁵

Whether Shelley was especially interested in *Werter* is an open question.⁶ According to Hogg, he was fascinated by the book, and was of the opinion that a continuation or amplification of the narrative was demanded in order to place Albert in a more favorable

¹ *Poems by Robert Southey*, Boston, 1799, p. 76.

² Cf. "English and American Imitations of Goethe's *Werter*," *Modern Philology*, XIV, No. 4 (August, 1916). This sonnet is to be classed with those there listed.

³ *Life and Correspondence*, IV, 186. In his *Einfluss der deutschen Literatur auf die Englische* (pp. 36–37), Margraf points out that Southey devoured *Werter* during his school days.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, 85–86.

⁶ For the influence of *Werter* upon Shelley's *Alastor*, cf. Immelmann, *Ztsch. f. vergleich. Literaturgesch.*, N.F., XVII, 431.

light.¹ Hogg tells us that Shelley, as a youth, made frequent attempts to write novels, and that he was accustomed to submit "choice passages" to him. He further states that he found "one morsel among Shelley's papers which relates to the amplification of *Werter*, and in which Albert is supposed to be doing the right thing in the right way." This "morsel" was published in Hogg's *Life of Shelley* (1858) with the title, "Fragment of a Novel."² It is a letter in which Albert is made to rebuke Werter for his intention to commit suicide and for his ardent passion. According to Rossetti³ and Dowden,⁴ this is not a piece of fiction, but a letter of Shelley's addressed to Hogg in which he remonstrates with the latter for having made advances to Shelley's wife, Harriet. Dowden believes that Hogg deliberately transformed the letter into a "Fragment of a Novel" in order to pervert the facts, and relates that for the sake of Harriet's happiness she and Shelley left Hogg at York in 1811 and moved to Keswick. "It was a situation worthy of the *Sorrows of Werter*. Shelley, with his professed superiority to passion, seemed to Hogg as cold and insensible as Goethe's Albert; Harriet had all the grace and freshness of a Lotte. What less could the forsaken Werter do than dispatch letter after letter in pursuit of his friends, announcing that he would have Harriet's forgiveness or would blow his brains out at her feet."

Byron, whose interest in Goethe was aroused by an acquaintance with Madame de Staël's *Allemagne*,⁵ knew *Werter* probably through the medium of one of the English translations. He never obtained a reading knowledge of German. Speaking of Goethe, Schiller, and Wieland, he says: "I only know them through the medium of English, French, and Italian translations. Of the real language I know absolutely nothing—except oaths, learned from postilions and officers in a squabble, etc."⁶ He undoubtedly felt kinship with the author of such works as *Faust* and *Werter*; but only once does he seem to have expressed his opinion of the novel. To a German translation of *Manfred* which appeared in 1820 there was appended a criticism by Goethe, in which it is stated "that in English poetry great genius, universal power, a feeling of profundity, with sufficient tenderness

¹ *Life of Shelley*, II, 488.

² *Ibid.*, II, 490-97.

³ *Memoirs of Percy B. Shelley*, p. 33.

⁴ *Life of Shelley*, I, 194.

⁵ Margraf, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁶ *Letters and Journals*, V, 171.

and force, are to be found; but that altogether these do not constitute poets, etc." To this Byron took exception. In the dedication to Goethe of the drama *Marino Faliero*, which he sent to Murray in October, 1820, he quotes a part of Goethe's criticism, and remarks:

It is, moreover, asserted that "the predominant character of the whole body of the present English poetry is a disgust and contempt for life." But I rather suspect that, by one single work of prose, you yourself have excited a greater contempt for life than all the English volumes of poesy that ever were written. Madame de Staël says that "*Werter* has occasioned more suicides than the most beautiful woman"; and I really believe that he has put more individuals out of this world than Napoleon himself, except in the way of his profession.¹

Thomas Carlyle's interest in German literature is well known.² He was the first to present a really appreciative account of German letters to the English public. That he was displeased with the first English version of *Werter* appears from the preface to his translation of *Wilhelm Meister*, written in 1824:

To such as know him by the faint and garbled version of his *Werter*, Goethe figures as a sort of poetic Heraclitus; some woe-begone hypochondriac, whose eyes are overflowing with perpetual tears, whose long life has been spent in melting into ecstasy at the sight of waterfalls, and clouds, and the moral sublime, or dissolving into hysterical wailings over hapless love and the miseries of human life. They are not aware that Goethe smiles at this performance of his youth.

In the introduction to his *German Romance* (1827), Carlyle includes a long sketch of Goethe's life and works, and pays considerable attention to *Werter*. He writes:

His *Sorrows of Werter* rose like a literary meteor on the world, and carried his name on its blazing wings, not only over Germany, but into the remotest corners of Europe. . . . *Werter* appeared to seize the hearts of men in all quarters of the world, and to utter for them the word which they had been waiting to hear. As usually happens, too, this same word once uttered was soon abundantly repeated, spoken in all dialects, and chanted through all the notes of the gamut, till at length the sound of it had grown a weariness rather than a pleasure.

Carlyle then proceeds with a discussion of the general reception of the book. He believed that *Werter* stood prominent among the causes,

¹ *Letters and Journals*, IV, 356.

² Cf. Streull, *Thomas Carlyle als Vermittler deutscher Litt. u. deutschen Geistes*. Cf. also Kraeger, "Carlyle's Stellung zur deutschen Sprache u. Litt.," *Anglia*, XXII, 145-342.

or, at the very least, among the signals, of a great change in modern literature, because it attempted for the first time

the more accurate delineation of a class of feelings deeply important to modern minds, but for which our elder poetry offered no exponent, and perhaps could offer none, because they are feelings that arise from passion incapable of being converted into action, and belong chiefly to an age as indolent, cultivated, and unbelieving as our own. This, notwithstanding the dash of falsehood which may exist in *Werter* itself, and the boundless delirium of extravagance which it called forth in others, is a high praise which cannot justly be denied it.

In 1828 Carlyle published an article on Goethe in the *Foreign Review*.¹ In this he states that *Werter* was not only representative of Goethe's early period, but that it illustrated both the writer and the public he was writing for. He believes that prior to the appearance of *Werter* the literature of Germany and of other countries had but partially awakened from a long torpor. Literature dwelt in a remote, conventional world, and consequently the public awaited some bolder impulse, some poet who should speak to them "from the heart to the heart." Thus Goethe, through *Werter*, became the spokesman of his generation. *Werter* is the

cry of that dim, rooted pain under which all thoughtful men of a certain age were languishing. It utters a complaint, and all Europe responds; and while it prescribes no remedy, the very utterance of this complaint is ardently grasped at. . . . If Byron's life-weariness, his moody and melancholy and mad stormful indignation, borne on the tones of a wild and quite artless melody, could pierce so deep into many a British heart, now that the matter is no longer new—is indeed old and trite—we may judge with what vehement acceptance this *Werter* must have been welcomed, coming as it did like a voice from unknown regions; the first thrilling peal of that impassioned dirge, which, in country after country, men's ears have listened to, till they were deaf to all else. For *Werter*, infusing itself into the core and whole spirit of literature, gave birth to a race of sentimentalists, who have raged and wailed in every part of the world, till better light dawned for them, or, at most, exhausted Nature laid herself to sleep, and it was discovered that lamenting was an unproductive labour.

Carlyle quotes the whole of *Werter's* letter of May 22,² as a specimen of the philosophy which reigns in the book, and closes his discussion by stating:

The writing of *Werter*, it would seem, indicating so gloomy, almost desperate a state of mind in the author, was at the same time a symptom,

¹ II, 80-127. Cf. especially pp. 90-95.

² Book I, Cotta ed., p. 18.

indeed a cause, of his now having got delivered from such melancholy. Far from recommending suicide to others, as *Werter* has often been accused of doing, it was the first proof that Goethe himself had abandoned these "hypochondriacal crotchets": the imaginary Sorrows had helped to free him from many real ones.

De Quincey, who learned German early in life, had some knowledge of *Werter*.¹ In a review of Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister*, contributed to the *London Magazine* in 1824,² he not only criticized Carlyle's work, but also showed scant appreciation of Goethe. In his biography of Goethe, written for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in 1837 or earlier,³ his estimate is higher. He now calls all of Goethe's works philosophic "by way of expressing their main characteristics in being written to serve a preconceived purpose, or to embody some peculiar view of life, or some aspects of philosophical truth." In a few lines he describes the publication of *Werter*, and in summing up Goethe's literary reputation he states: "It is a fact that, in the opinion of some amongst the acknowledged leaders of our literature for the last twenty-five years, *Werter* was superior to all which followed it, and for mere power was the paramount work of Goethe. For ourselves, we must acknowledge our assent upon the whole to this verdict." The fact, however, that De Quincey does not attempt any analysis of *Werter*, though he does analyze Goethe's other works, leads one to believe that he was not well acquainted with it. Dunn states that De Quincey wrote this biography from slight and often second-hand knowledge, and that he had read *Wilhelm Meister*, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, and probably *Werter*.⁴

Although William Hazlitt does not seem to have had much general interest in German literature, his appreciation of Goethe's novel is expressed in his essay "Why the Heroes of Romances Are Insipid."⁵ Hazlitt cites *Werter* as a type of the heroes of the philosophical school of romance, and says:

Instead of being commonplace and insipid, they are one violent and startling paradox from beginning to end. They run atilt at all established

¹ W. A. Dunn, *Thomas De Quincey's Relation to German Literature and Philosophy*.

² X, 192.

³ Reprinted in the *Collected Writings of De Quincey*, edited by Masson, IV, 395-421.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

⁵ In *Sketches and Essays* (collected and published by his son in 1839), p. 273.

usages and prejudices, and overset all the existing order of society. There is plenty of interest here; and, instead of complaining of a calm, we are borne along by a hurricane of passion and eloquence, certainly without anything of "temperance that may give it smoothness."

Bulwer-Lytton states in his *Autobiography* that his mother at the age of twenty-two had become acquainted with a Mr. Rawlins, who "had been in the land of Goethe, whose first romance was then to the youth of Europe what *Childe Harold* was afterwards. He knew the supposed original of that wondrous tale of sentiment and sorrow, which my mother in some of her prettiest drawings had illustrated."¹ It is likely, then, that Bulwer made early acquaintance with *Werter*. He was perhaps more influenced by it than by any other German work. His first novel, *Falkland*, published in 1827, shows in both form and content that he had chosen *Werter* as his model.² In the preface to the edition of *Pelham* published in 1835 he refers to *Falkland* as follows: "The effect which the composition of that work produced upon my mind was exactly similar to that which (if I may quote so illustrious an example) Goethe informs us the writing of *Werter* produced upon his own. I had rid my bosom of its 'perilous stuff'—I had confessed my sins and was absolved. I could return to real life and its wholesome objects."

Bulwer's fullest expression concerning *Werter* is found in his *Life of Schiller*, published in 1844. In this he reviews briefly the development of German literature previous to the appearance of Schiller's *Räuber*, and in discussing Goethe he states:

In his *Werter* he concentrates the history of an epoch in his country, the epoch of Rousseau Mania. But though the *Nouvelle Héloïse* is incontestably the origin of *Werter*, those who regard it as a mere copy do it miserable injustice. There is more rhetorical eloquence in one page of the *Nouvelle Héloïse* than in the whole of *Werter*—but there is more nature in one page of *Werter* than in the whole of the *Nouvelle Héloïse*. In this, the warmest and most actual of all Goethe's novels—if once overrated, now so unjustly depreciated, which he did right to regret for its moral, which he did wrong to disparage as a proof of his genius—lies the germ of much that, in fiction, its author's riper intellect matured. Here we see that association of homeliness and grandeur which his enemies have called the "Adornment of

¹ *The Life, Letters and Literary Remains of Edward Bulwer, etc.*, by his son, I, 58.

² Cf. Goldhahn, "Über die Einwirkung des Goetheschen *Werthers* u. *Wilhelm Meister* auf die Entwicklung Edward Bulwers," *Anglia*, XVI, 267-91.

Commonplace." What Englishman, with his fastidious classical taste, has not ridiculed the contrast of the hero in the clouds, and the heroine cutting bread and butter—of the solemnity of deliberate suicide, and the exact description of the top-boots and blue coat in which the unhappy man rushed to the dread unknown? But, considered by a higher art than we learn at college, it is this very homeliness of detail that gives truth to the romance.¹

Bulwer discovered, not only in *Werter*, but also in many of Goethe's other writings, "the inclination to describe, not so much the beautiful nobleness, as the diseased infirmity, of an intellectual character," and in *Werter* and *Clavigo* particularly he saw "an exhibition of man's weakness apart from man's interests."

Other works of Bulwer contain scattered references to *Werter*. In his novel *Alice*,² for instance, he writes:

Meanwhile it is a consolation to know that nothing really immoral is ever permanently popular, or ever, therefore, long deleterious; what is dangerous in a work of genius cures itself in a few years. We can now read *Werter* and instruct our hearts by its exhibition of weakness and passion—our tastes by its exquisite and unrivalled simplicity of construction and detail, without any fear that we shall shoot ourselves in top-boots.

Again, in 1862, he refers to the novel in his *Miscellanies*.³ "I doubt whether even the *Werter* of Goethe or the *Nouvelle Héloïse* of Rousseau would have been written if *Clarissa Harlowe* had not laid the train of thought that led to their composition."

Thackeray's acquaintance with *Werter* has become universally known through his little "bread and butter" poem. He visited Weimar in the summer of 1830, and became intimate with Goethe.⁴ In his letter to Lewes in 1855, describing his recollections of this visit,⁵ he states that during his hours spent with Goethe they "read over endless novels in French, English, and German." It was then, perhaps, that he became familiar with Goethe's first novel.

Although Thackeray said little concerning *Werter*, the character of his poem and of his incidental references to the book show that he was amused by it. Thus in his *Yellowplush Papers*, published in 1837, he refers to the *Sorrows of MacWhirter* as one of those "melan-

¹ *Miscellaneous Prose Works*, Harper ed., New York, 1868, II, 353.

² Harper ed., Philadelphia, 1874, II, 28.

³ II, 332.

⁴ Cf. Vulpius, "Thackeray in Weimar" (trans. by Herbert Schurz), *Century*, XXXI (1897), 920.

⁵ Lewes, *Life of Goethe*, p. 560.

choly stoary books."¹ In the "Story of Mary Ancel" in the *Paris Sketch Book* (1840), the executioner, Gregoire, a man of the lowest station of society, is continually reading the *Sorrows of Werter*, that "sublime performance." "When a man is in love," Thackeray writes, "his taste is not very refined, any maudlin trash of prose or verse appearing sublime to him, provided it corresponds, in some degree, with his own situation."²

Thackeray's comical poem "Sorrows of Werter" seems to have been written during his visit to America in 1852-53. He spent several months in this country in the winter and spring, lecturing in some of the eastern and southern cities. The poem appeared first in the *Southern Literary Messenger*³ in November, 1853, with this comment:

The following characteristic verses of Thackeray's have been lying for some months in a portfolio of literary autographs in our possession. They were written by him one morning last spring at our editorial table, during a call he made upon us, and they have afforded amusement to many friends who have read them in MS. It is curious to see how briefly and comically the satirist tells the sentimental story of the *Sorrows of Werter*.

The poem was reprinted in December of the same year in *Littell's Living Age*⁴ and in the *Literary World*.⁵ It was published in Thackeray's *Miscellanies* in 1855.

George Henry Lewes's biography of Goethe, published in 1855, is epoch-making in the history of *Werter* criticism in England. Lewes gives a detailed treatment of Goethe's Wetzlar period, of the origin of *Werter*, and of the novel as a literary production. He praises it in the following terms:

Werter is not much read nowadays, especially in England, where it labours under the double disadvantage of a bad name and an execrable translation. Yet it is well worth reading in the original, where it will be found very unlike the notion of it current among us. I remember reading it many years ago in the execrable English version with astonishment and contempt; this contempt remained, until accidentally falling in with a Spanish translation, the exquisite beauty of the pictures changed my feeling into admiration, and Goethe's own wonderful prose afterwards fixed that admiration forever. It is a masterpiece of style; we may look through German literature in vain for such clear sunny pictures, fulness of life, and

¹ Cf. *The Amours of Mr. Deuceace*, Harper ed., chaps. v and vii, pp. 301-11.

² Cf. *The Paris Sketch Book*, Harper ed., I, 122, 124, 126, 133.

³ XIX, 709.

⁴ XXXIX, 642.

⁵ XIII, 313.

delicately managed simplicity. Its style is one continuous strain of music, which, restrained within the limits of prose, fulfills all the conditions of poetry; dulcet as the sound of falling waters, and as full of sweet melancholy as an autumnal eve.¹

Interesting minor references to *Werter* appear in Crabbe, Peacock, and Borrow. Crabbe shows the fame of the book as early as 1807 in the *Paris Register*. In describing a cottage in the country, he writes:

Fair prints along the paper'd walls are spread;
There, Werter sees the sportive children fed,
And Charlotte here bewails her lover dead.²

Peacock mentions the book in his *Nightmare Abbey*, published in 1818. In this the hero, Scythrop, a sentimental youth, fond of solitude, is accustomed "to take his evening seat on a fallen fragment of mossy stone with his back resting against the ruined wall . . . and the *Sorrows of Werter* in his hand."³ Borrow refers to the novel in his autobiographical story *Lavengro*, written in 1851. To the Scholar of Norwich (William Taylor) he attributes the words:

Werter is a fictitious character, and by no means a felicitous one; I am no admirer either of Werter or his author. But I should say that, if there ever was a Werter in Germany, he did not smoke. Werter, as you very justly observe, was a poor creature.

Later, the Publisher is made to remark: "Goethe is a drug; his *Sorrows* are a drug."⁴

In America one finds a few scattered references to *Werter* by people of note. During the last decade of the eighteenth century the popularity of the book was sufficient to induce Dr. Benjamin Rush to pass judgment upon it. In his *Thoughts upon the Female Education*, published in 1798, he states:

The abortive sympathy which is excited by the recital of imaginary distress blunts the heart to that which is real; and hence, we sometimes see instances of young ladies, who weep away a whole afternoon over the criminal sorrows of a fictitious Charlotte or Werter, turning with disdain at three o'clock from the sight of a beggar, who solicits in feeble accents or signs a small portion of the crumbs which fall from their fathers' tables.⁵

¹ *Life and Works of Goethe* (Everyman's Library), p. 155.

² *Poetical Works of the Rev. George Crabbe*, London, 1834, II, 190.

³ *Nightmare Abbey*, New York, 1845, chap. ii, p. 98.

⁴ *Lavengro* (Everyman's Library), chap. xxiii, p. 141; chap. xxxiii, p. 200.

⁵ *Essays, Literary, Moral and Philosophical*, Philadelphia, 1798, p. 82.

From this time on no notice was taken of the novel by persons of eminence until the second decade of the nineteenth century, when American criticism of German letters entered upon a new period. American scholars went to Germany, and upon their return published reviews of German works. Edward Everett and George Ticknor, who returned from Göttingen in 1817, were the pioneers of this movement. They were succeeded in Göttingen by such men as Cogswell, Bancroft, Hedge, and Calvert.¹ The critical writings of these men appeared chiefly in the *North American Review*. In 1817 Everett published a lengthy review of Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*.² After quoting several passages concerning the facts upon which *Werter* was based, he spoke of the form in which the novel was known to the English reader:

The one [translation] which we have seen, besides the omission of whole letters, and parts of letters, is a miserable catch-penny circulating library production, apparently made from the French. Nothing of the genuine *Werter* is to be seen in it but what was proof against the ignorance of the language and inferiority to the subject, which mark the translation. . . . Whether a better one is to be expected from England, whose productions, good and bad, are reprinted in America with such exemplary diligence, we cannot say. Some of our readers have been gratified with the sight of a manuscript translation at home, which is worthy of the inimitable original.³

Everett's review is thoroughly appreciative and enthusiastic, as might be expected in view of his personal touch with Germany and with Goethe. While he offers no direct criticism of *Werter*, he is the first to call the attention of American readers to the inadequate version through which they had made acquaintance with the novel. For many years the American public, like the English, was dependent upon the first English translation of 1779.

George Bancroft, in his "Life and Genius of Goethe," published in the *North American Review*, in 1824,⁴ is less enthusiastic. He states that the productions of Goethe's early life partake of the character of his mind:

They contain the clear expression of his feelings, vehement and uncontrolled, the clear indications of great powers, not yet directed by reflections

¹ Cf. H. S. White, "Goethe in America," *Goethe Jahrbuch*, V, 219. Cf. also S. H. Goodnight, *German Literature in American Magazines prior to 1846*, p. 33.

² *North American Review*, IV, 217.

³ Apparently a reference to Ticknor's unpublished translation.

⁴ XIX, 307.

nor restrained by taste. Both *Goetz* and *Werter* bear the impress of genius and are strictly national works. They are also both Goethe's early predilections and passions. . . . In *Werter* he introduced all that observation and the experience of his own heart had taught him of the wasting vehemence of love. This is not the highest kind of writing.

The next reference to *Werter* was made by Margaret Fuller in her "Essay on Goethe," published in *The Dial*¹ in 1841. After commenting on Goethe's sympathetic and impetuous youth, when it was hard for him to isolate himself, she says:

The effect of all this outward pressure on the poet is recorded in *Werter*, a production that he afterwards understood, and to which he even felt positive aversion. It was natural that this should be. In the calm air of the cultivated plain he attained, the remembrance of the miasma of sentimentality was odious to him. Yet sentimentality is but sentiment diseased, which to be cured must be patiently observed by the wise physician; so are the morbid desire and despair of *Werter* the sickness of a soul aspiring to a purer, freer state, but mistaking the way.

She vigorously condemns *Werter's* attitude toward life, but praises the novel as being characterized by a "fervid eloquence of Italian glow which betrays a part of Goethe's character" and which is almost lost sight of in the "quiet transparency" of his later productions.

An effort has been made to collect in this paper the significant expressions of English and American writers of note concerning Goethe's novel. Fragmentary as they may seem, they make it clear that such writers as Southey and Bulwer were deeply affected by the story; and the facts that Carlyle considered *Werter* epoch-making, that Hazlitt found each page full of interest, and that Lewes pronounced it wonderful prose and a masterpiece of style show that, even if the enthusiasm for the book had apparently ceased at the beginning of the nineteenth century, its influence in English literature still continued to be felt, and that it made a lasting impression. With the exception of *Faust*, perhaps, no German work has enjoyed so much fame.

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¹ II, 7 f. Cf. also F. A. Brown, *Margaret Fuller and Goethe*, New York, 1910, pp. 191-95.